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**CITY OF BALTIMORE**  
**BERNARD C. “JACK” YOUNG**  
**Mayor**



**DEPARTMENT OF LAW**  
**ANDRE M. DAVIS, CITY SOLICITOR**  
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**BALTIMORE, MD 21202**

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September 24, 2019

*Via Email Only*

Jason Downs, Esq.  
Downs Collins, P.A.

James L. Rhodes, Esq.  
The Law Office of James L. Rhodes

Anton Iamele, Esq.  
Iamele & Iamele, LLP

Re: *Purdie v. Laracuent*  
Case No. 24-C-18-003242 (Cir. Ct. Balt. City)

*Pressley v. Torres*  
Case No. 24-C-18-002348 (Cir. Ct. Balt. City)

*Griffin v. McDermott*  
Case No. 24-C-18-003991 (Cir. Ct. Balt. City)

Dear Counsel:

You represent a plaintiff in a lawsuit in which your client brought damages claims against members of the Baltimore City Police Department. In each case, the matter has been settled on terms acceptable to all parties, with no admission of liability by any defendant.

In each case, the settlement payment agreed to by the parties is less than \$25,000; accordingly, the Settlement Agreement and Release (“SAR”) executed by the parties need not be presented to the Board of Estimates (“BOE”) for approval. Such approvals are provided solely by the Settlement Committee and the City Solicitor. Nevertheless, in accordance with procedures recently adopted by the Law Department and approved by the Mayor and the President of the City Council (who, of course, sets the agenda of the BOE) the settlements in these cases will be noted as *non-action* items on the BOE’s “*non-routine agenda*” on October 2, 2019.

Under the new procedures, in the discretion of the President, your client will be afforded an opportunity to speak at the end of the BOE’s action on its routine agenda. It is expected that from two to five minutes might be provided to each person who has settled their claim and who wishes to appear and speak.

**I must emphasize that an appearance by your client (with you accompanying them or not) is in no way a condition of the settlement of their claim; indeed, I have already executed the SAR and the check payable to your law firm is being processed.** The purpose of the procedure is simply to create a more transparent lawsuit settlement process, and to make it possible even after a settlement agreement is reached for those who wish to express their views about their experience to do so. (If your client wishes not to appear but wishes to be contacted by the media to discuss their experience, you may provide me with your client's contact information and I will provide that contact information on a confidential basis to members of the media who routinely cover the BOE meetings.)

You are a long-time practitioner who has handled cases of this type over several years. I understand these new procedures may come as a surprise in light of prior practices. But as the Mayor expressed in the Executive Order he issued on September 13, 2019:

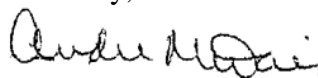
It is the policy of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore that unreasonable constraints on free speech rights are categorically contrary to the best interests of the City and its residents, and do not meaningfully contribute to the restoration of trust between members of the broader community and police officers and other public servants; and

Such unreasonable constraints will not be employed in the Release and Settlement Agreements routinely executed in the settlement of litigation against the City, its departments, agencies, commissions, officials, and employees.

The Law Department's new procedures are designed to ensure that every litigant settling claims against police officers may use their voice as they see fit, speak their truth, and that the restoration of trust between the police and the community will be achieved at the earliest possible time.

It would be useful (so that I can advise the members of the BOE) if you will give me advance notice if you think your client intends to appear before the BOE on October 2, 2019. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Andre M. Davis  
City Solicitor

cc: President and Members of the Board of Estimates  
Clerk to the Board of Estimates